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THE
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DR. ANNA DENGEL
Editor

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ACROSS THE PAGES. . . .

DURING THIS JUBILEE YEAR of the Catholic University of America, marking the completion of its first half century of service to our country, it is especially fitting that Americans should join wholeheartedly in the prayer of the Holy Father for "the success of Catholic universities in mission lands." The rector of our Catholic university in Washington, Msgr. Corrigan, has written for us a brief supplement on this mission intention.

AD LUCEM "is an association . . . whose aim is to arouse, to form, and to aid lay people who want to render Catholic Action services in mission lands." It is with the help of this Association that Drs. Ajoulat and Gaubert, of France, have been able to establish a medical mission in Cameroon.

NEW INTERNES, like new babies, have their footprints taken on their first day in the hospital. The writer, who prefers to remain anonymous, has consented to relate a few of the times she "put her foot into it" the first day!

OUR PILGRIMAGE ends with this issue—and fittingly enough, it is to Bethlehem that Sister M. Helen takes us!

SISTER M. FRANCIS, as our "Philadelphia correspondent," sends in her first "scoop"—the blessing of our new Motherhouse bell!

H. Ludwig. Hall i. T.

"And the Word was made flesh====

And dwelt amongst us!"

Mother and Child

By
ANNA DENGEL, S.C.M.M., M.D.

The world is teeming with human beings. As a matter of fact, the population has been doubled during the last century, and quadrupled since the eighteenth. This indicates that in spite of the much talked of evils of the age, there are numberless women who now, as of yore, count the hardships of motherhood as worth the prize of holding in their arms a minute replica of themselves in the form of that most lovable of all lovable things, a new-born baby.

No artist nor poet nor artisan of any kind can give us anything so precious, so beautiful, as the mother's gift to the world—a living babe, a totally new creation, which can never again lose its identity or sink into nothingness. In the eyes of faith, it is even more marvelous and significant: Once the waters of baptism have flowed over its tiny head, it becomes the rich heir to the kingdom of heaven.

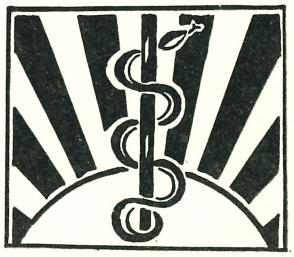
The mother gives of herself to the child, physically and mentally. She is his and he is hers. The mother gives her substance, her love, her caresses, her admiration, her time, her comfort, her care, her thought. The child, in his turn, develops the latent physical, emotional and mental powers of the mother by his unuttered but inexorable demands from the first day of his life. The mother enriches the child, and the child enriches the mother!

Yet, in our day, motherhood to a goodly number has lost its desirability, yes, even its purpose. And why? Women like men are the victims of their times, and when one delves deeper into reasons, humanly speaking one cannot help but be sympathetic and wonder whether it is possible to get the better of circumstances. In so-called civilized countries, motherhood is no longer a simple affair. It interferes with economic and social tasks; it is costly, and the responsibility of having to provide a suitable education to more than a limited number of children is, to say the least, a factor which cannot be ignored. Added to this is the apparent futility of bringing children into a world of potential enforced idleness and war. Frankly, if one talks to a person who can see only the human side of things, one is up against a wall. It is a waste of time to disagree. The only people who can view things more unconcernedly are those who live under such primitive conditions that mother nature takes care of them, and those who are so imbued with the supernatural that "seek first the Kingdom of God and the rest will be added unto you" has a vital significance to them. It requires faith—tremendous faith! Faith is never confounded. Even an Indian philosopher says: "God gives milk to the toothless child—why would He not give him meat when He gives him teeth?"

Now at Christmas the thought of motherhood comes to the fore, but under a very surprising aspect, one totally opposed to the ways of human wisdom. The Son of God, the Creator and Owner of the whole universe, comes into the world asking His human mother to be homeless on the night of His birth, and to accept shelter in a stable bare of all comforts and exposed to the elements. Could it have been to console the poorest mother, and take away from her the modern blame that unless you can provide adequately for the children, you should not bring them into the world?

Or—another thought: Could it also have been that the Infant Jesus made Himself helpless and His mother so poor, to give us the honor and privilege of helping Him, that He could truly say whatever you do for My sake to mothers and children of generations to come, you do it unto Me!

"Ad Lucem" in the Cameroon



FROM

"Les Missions Catholiques"

In 1935 a young doctor, Louis Ajoulat, a graduate of the Catholic University of Lille, went to Cameroon, Africa, to investigate the possibilities of collaboration between doctors of medicine and priests. Today, in the Vicariate of Yaounde in Cameroon, there exists a medical mission foundation known under the name of *Fondation Médicale ad Lucem* (Medical Foundation Ad Lucem).

The missionaries of this territory made no objections to the plan proposed by the young man, the work has continued and grown, and the natives themselves have come to know that the Catholic laborers in the mission fields, although primarily interested in the soul's welfare, do not for all of that neglect proper care of the body. Catholic doctors in these lands already merit a certain prestige because of their European origin and their status as men of science. They add to this their example of a truly charitable and Christian life, forwarding in a magnificent manner the Church's apostolate. Even more directly they render a great help by giving medical aid to the missionaries, the seminarians and the native sisters.

So it was that foundations were laid for two hospitals, one in Efok, and one in Omvan. The missions took the responsibility for the erection of the buildings, but the installation as well as the financial care involved in the running of the hospitals was in the hands of the association, *Ad Lucem*. The initial steps in the great work were made possible by several gifts coming from France. The foundation developed nicely. Experiments showed that the population as a whole was willing to pay for medicines and surgical care. The hospitals prospered, and one has been able to pay normal salaries to the doctors and other assistants.

In 1936, Dr. Ajoulat came for a second time to Cameroon, bringing with him a companion, Dr. Gaubert. Both were married and ready to settle down, the former in Efok, the latter in Omvan. Since that time neither of the two young doctors has had a day of rest. Yet for all their efforts, if the work is to be furthered, they need more help, and optimistically hope that many more volunteers will join their apostolate.

The services which the doctors render are manifold. At 7:30 a. m. they "do the rounds," and then begin operations, which occupy them until noon—they attend to all the surgery in their hospitals. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon work begins once more. This time it is the outpatients who claim attention—sometimes more than 30 of them on a single day.

Of course the young men do not carry on single-handed. It is not necessary to say that one doctor could not take care of the two to three hundred persons who crowd around the hospital each morning! Those whose state of health does not require a special examination, averaging about 150 per day, are treated by two sisters. The bandaging of wounds and sores and the laboratory work are left to the nurses, both native and European.

Besides this direct hospital work, the doctors visit very regularly the dispensaries of the neighboring villages. Dr. Gaubert, of Omvan, visits seven of these, one of which is at a distance of 160 railroad miles from his hospital! This necessitates an absence for at least one day, and sometimes two.

Not satisfied with serving the Church by giving medical aid to these poor natives, Dr. Ajoulat desires to participate more closely in the missionary apostolate: One of the aims of *Ad Lucem* is to promote in pagan lands the spirit of Catholic Mission Action. Thus in his hospital, and by his whole professional and family life, the doctor strives to prove by example in his native-pagan surroundings that it is possible for a lay person to live an integral Christian life. He places all his experience as a worthy Catholic Action man in the service of the missionaries. His care extends even to the native nurses, to their occupations during their spare time, and their life in the village.

This splendid Catholic Medical Mission foundation in Cameroon can be fully understood only when one considers it as an application and realization of the great ideals of the Association Ad Lucem whose headquarters are in Lille. Its aim is to arouse, to form and to aid lay people who want to render Catholic Action service in mission lands. It takes young people of every profession who have understood the problems of Catholic Action and of the missions, and makes an effort to solve the one with the other.

It is with the help of this association that Dr. Ajoulat has been able to start his work in Cameroon, and thanks to the aid he has received from it his beautiful work has continued and developed.

Brand New Interne

As I get off the street car the resumed weight of my two heavy suitcases makes me grateful I've only a short walk to the hospital. The early morning is sunny and balmy and the birds are chirping. A beautiful day! It just fits my mood. At last! Here I am, with my precious diploma tucked safely in my bag and a glorious year before me. The grind of textbooks and lectures is behind. The real thing is ahead—to rid the world of all its woes and ills. It's enough to make anyone's heart sing. So I hum to myself as I walk up the big stone steps of the hospital "everything is rosy now."

On my arrival at the hospital I am assigned to a small pleasant room, where I change my street clothes for spotless white. With commendable prudence I start to arrange textbooks, notes, and outlines on the desk. To be sure, I know a good deal, but after all, I reflect, references are necessary at times. One can't remember everything. Perhaps I won't need all of them—some are quite elementary. While I am debating whether or not to return some of them to my suitcase, the telephone rings for the first time. Feeling very professional, I answer it promptly. It is the office.

"Doctor, the superintendent would like to see all the new interns in her office immediately."

Glad to begin work I answer that I will be there at once.

Downstairs, in the office, the superintendent first introduces us all to one another. Then giving us the rules of the hospital she counsels us, "Be sure you answer the bells promptly and be sure you are polite to the chiefs. Now, good luck and success for the coming year."

Just as she finishes my chief appears. With a brief nod and a smile of greeting he takes me on rounds for the first time. We walk briskly up this hall, down that, through wards and private rooms. As we go he comments succinctly and issues his orders, brief and to the point. A veritable volley of words to be caught and penned in my notebook as "tasks of the day."

"This case, doctor is very puzzling—septic temperature for four weeks—all lab studies negative. It's up to you to diagnose and cure him. (Even chiefs on rounds must have a bit of pleasantry.) Here is an ordinary cardiac decomp—expected to go out any day—keep him comfortable—This is a suspected cancer of the stomach—do a G.I. study and gastric analysis—I'll expect the results in two days. Here's a new patient—just admitted—have the history, physical and preliminary lab studies by tomorrow—"

So we go from bed to bed and the notes, reasonably neat at the start become a scribble which I devoutly hope will be readable. Once in a while, he stops to talk to a patient and then I take the opportunity to catch my breath and jot down his last sentence legibly. Occasionally he takes a dig at my newness.

"Here's a patient—operated on twenty-four hours ago—complains of terrible gas pains—Good morning, Mr. S———. Here is your *new* doctor who will cure those pains entirely and in a short time!"

By the end of half an hour I have seen all my patients—about thirty. I return to my room exhausted, lock the door, and begin to try to decipher the code which has spontaneously developed itself during the hectic rounds. The sight of the books and notes on the desk is reassuring and I discard the notion of packing any of them away. As soon as the notebook is made readable, I will look up a few points—just to be sure.

Alas! Before I'm hardly seated the telephone rings peremptorily.

"Doctor, your patient in 285 has a nosebleed. What do you want us to do?"

"Nosebleed? Hm, mm,—put an ice cap on his head and keep him quiet."

"We did that. He's still bleeding profusely."

"We-ll, I'll be down right away."

As I hurry down the hall my thoughts run like rabbits at a gun shot. Most of them reach a safe hole and disappear. I manage though to catch one by the tail.

"Nosebleed? Of course! An adrenaline pack will stop it. Silly to get disturbed over a nosebleed."

Putting on my best bedside manner, I hurry into the room. There I am confronted with a deeply jaundiced young man, indeed bleeding profusely from nose and mouth. Turning to the nurse I give my orders.

"We'll put in an adrenaline pack."

Smoothly, courteously, comes her reply,

"We've done that already, doctor, and it doesn't help."

My mind is perfectly blank, not even a rabbit tail in sight this time. I'm really getting panicky when I remember another device. I almost shout in my relief.

"A pack! A nasal pack, nurse!"

Simple thing—only a piece of gauze rolled tightly into a ball with three strings attached to it. Sure, one puts the gauze into the back of the throat and then attaches the strings to the cheek through the nose and mouth.

The nurse returns with the pack. Gazing at its elegant simplicity I am at a loss. With a sinking heart I realize I don't know how to manage those three dangling strings. Swallowing my pride, I pick up the phone to report to the chief that I can't stop a nosebleed! An earthquake could not have seemed to me a greater calamity. O vanity of vanities! ye gilt-edged diploma! I who would cure all the ills of the world can't stop a nosebleed!

Within a few minutes the chief appears, calm, polite and unruffled. He deftly manipulates those puzzling strings, secures the pack and has the bleeding stopped within two minutes. We walk away in silence.

But the feeling of depression which comes over me has short shrift. As I walk soberly back to my room, mulling over the embarrassing incident, I am roused from my self introspection by the loud speaker,

"Calling Dr. Magnus! Calling Dr. Magnus!"

What now? My orders are still in a disgraceful state which grieves my methodical soul. There is no help for it though, so I call the office and inquire what is wanted, with as much good humor as I can muster.

"Doctor, will you please take pediatrics clinic today? The chief is unable to make it."

In the basement someone hands me a stack of medical cards and I try to walk unconcernedly down the hall between two rows of crying babies and worried, impatient parents. Seated at the desk I call for my first patient who is a little girl of about six held firmly by the hand, by her watchful mother.

"Doctor, my little girl has had a bad cough for a week. I'd like some cough medicine for her."

I examine the child. Yes, she has a cough—mm—a peculiar cough—mm—very peculiar—something special about it. The answer is teasing my brain. That cough—Just then Sally gives her own diagnosis. The characteristic inspiratory whoop is unmistakable. Whooping Cough! With a feeling of relief, I write the prescription and tell the child's mother what the trouble is. At last I've done something right, even if it is only to recognize the whoop that most mothers are familiar with. None-theless, the mild triumph brings back my rapidly vanishing self-confidence.

The children with colds and stomach-aches and the babies who won't eat and who cry all night, I fix up somehow. During the course of the morning the jottings of "points to be looked up in the text-books" grow to a startling length. Finally the last patient is admitted. He is a lad of about ten, a bit scared but interested in everything he can see.

"He has worms," his father says briefly, "and I'd like some medicine for him."

His words recall a five o'clock lecture given on a winter afternoon which dealt with that particular subject—the various kinds of worms and the medicine suitable for each, chenopodium, carbon tetrachloride, santonin, etc. But alas! not a single dosage can I remember. Squaring my shoulders I give a discourse on worms and then request them to return the next day with a specimen.

So the first morning of my life as a practising M.D. passes. My body is clamoring for dinner but the bruises of my spirit are much the more painful of the two. O Theory and Practise, how far thou art apart! However, I manage to eat a good dinner and then I return to my room. The bed is so inviting that I decide to grant myself a few moments relaxation. In five minutes I am fast asleep. In about an hour, when I wake refreshed, the world has resumed a pinkish hue. I wonder if it will ever appear so very rosy again, but the numerous duties which press leave me no time for philosophizing, so I go to work.

With the help of books, notes and nurses, I accomplish the orders of the morning's rounds. The task takes me back to the wards where I get acquainted with some of my patients. Thus, the afternoon passes peacefully and I find I'm "off call" for the night. Thank God! I'm really tired.

Made from a silhouette-photograph of our Tyrolese-carved Christmas crib figures.

Courtesy *Crusader's Almanac*

Bethlehem—A General View

Pilgrimage

By

SISTER M. HELEN, S.C.M.M., R.N.

(Concluded)

When we were small, I can remember that we had a very special technique for the eating of cake. First the bottom layer, then the bottom strip of the top layer—and last of all the sliver that was left with its generous burden of frosting. As we started out on our final sightseeing trip after midday refreshment, I felt like that child of "once upon a time." After all, the whole trip had been "cake," and yet there was a special sweetness to this "last bite!"

Bethlehem is only about twenty-minutes' drive from Jerusalem. One sees it already at a distance—a quiet, peaceful city nestled on a hillside. Even the road sharpened our anticipation—we passed an old, open well, known as the "Well of the Magi," or "Well of the Star." Legend says that the Magi stopped here to drink and to water their camels. Less fortunate than they, we had no star to lead us, but had to depend upon a guide with more of an eye for business than for legend!

Before taking us to the Church of the Nativity, our driver brought us to a sudden halt before a curio shop. With a sweeping gesture we were introduced to the proprietor of the booth, an Arab Christian who was a friend of his. The invitation was inevitable: Wouldn't we come in? Kindly but firmly we announced we had no intention of buying souvenirs.

"Only come in and see my wares, and let me give you a cup of coffee," he insisted. Again we protested we had no interest in "wares"; he was determined, our guide was his friend—and in we went.

Of course, the coffee had to be prepared, so during the interim our self-appointed host displayed his stock: rosaries, holy pictures, carved ivory, wooden figures—really a lovely collection, but we committed ourselves to nothing. We simply were not in the market.

The coffee arrived. It was served in minute little cups—the size actually proved providential as the beverage was very strong and so sweet it was syrupy! When we had finished, our host insisted on filling them once more. Perhaps he was calculating: "One cup, no sale; two cups—one sale, maybe!" But we were not to be persuaded. We had told him candidly and repeatedly we had no money to spend, and so when we left, the final report had to be: "two cups; no sale!"

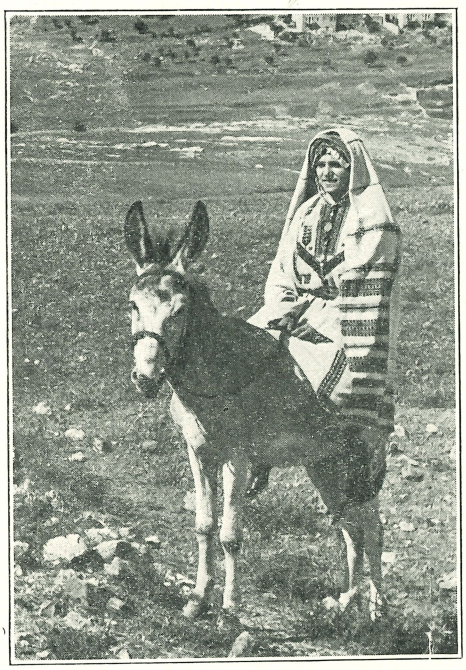
The Church of the Nativity was built in the fourth century by Constantine and is the only early Christian church which escaped destruction—it is the oldest church in existence which is still in use. Our driver procured a guide for us—a service which would cost us, he said, just five piastres each—and we began our tour.

There are three divisions in the church, one part belonging to the Greeks, one to the Latins and one to the Armenians. Our first visit was to the Latin church, which looked very western with its rows of large, Corinthian pillars. Then we entered the Greek section. The "Cave of the Nativity" lies here below the high altar. A Greek priest gave us lighted tapers, and we made our way down the dark staircase which led to the cave. The noise of our descent ruffled the stillness; our tapers which had seemed to give such feeble light on our way, took on a new brightness amid the many candles which lighted the shrine. Beneath a small altar on the floor was a star, bearing the inscription: "HERE JESUS WAS BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY." We knelt down and reverently kissed the stone—for a moment we were simply silent. I was trying, and perhaps a little vainly, to reconcile this spot with the "cave" of my imagination. In the first place, mention of the Nativity always brings a picture of winter and snow and ice—but actually, the sun outside was almost unpleasantly hot. And then the shepherds—but our guide had told us that there were no Jews in Bethlehem, and indeed, all the men we had seen were wearing flowing Arab headdress. Many of the older women wore the same style of head covering that was in use in Our Lord's time—a high, round bonnet with a veil thrown over it. On Christmas night there had

been stars and angels—here one could see only a ceiling of blackened rock, from which were hung gold and silver lambs innumerable. Even the walls were covered with asbestos tapestry. Following the directions of our guide, we made our way through a narrow passage into another rock cave. It was here that St. Jerome lived when he translated the Vulgate.

Emerging once more into daylight, we stood for a moment to survey the scene as a whole. The main door, viewed thus at leisure, seemed unusually small and low. We remarked on this and were told that during a siege the original door had been closed up until the opening was too small to permit mounted armed riders to come into the church and murder the worshippers!

There was one more spot of legendary significance in the vicinity—the "Cave of the Milk." According to the tale that is told, Our Lady was nursing the infant Jesus as she passed by this spot, and a drop of her milk fell on a rock which forthwith turned snowy white. A small mosaic of the Christ-Child being fed by His mother is placed just above the entrance of the cave, and a statue of the same scene stands above the altar within. Our guide told us that mothers often made pilgrimages to this spot to seek for special favors. He gave us as a souvenir a few grains of rock, wrapped in a tiny packet, and then, declaring he had shown us everything there was to be seen, he asked for his wages and left us to make our way back to our car.



Courtesy *Crusader's Almanac.*

The same styles that prevailed in Our Lord's time . . .

Thus orphaned, we found ourselves again besieged by shopkeepers, who entreated us to "please only look at their wares, even if we did not wish to buy." No doubt some of their persistency was due to the fact that tourists nowadays are few and far between. But I am afraid we were a match for them; we were determined that we needed no souvenirs, and persevered in our course until we reached the car. As we drove off, we felt almost as if we were escaping!

Courtesy *Crusader's Almanac.*

Entrance to the Church of the Nativity

This was on Thursday. On Friday we had been told that in the afternoon the Stations were made publicly along the *Via Dolorosa,* conducted by the Franciscan Fathers and Sisters from different monasteries and schools, and pilgrims were welcome to take part. But—inexorable schedules! The last train of the week left Lydda in the morning. If I did not wish to miss my boat—and I did not!—I would have to leave too soon. That meant I should still have two days until sailing time at Port Said—but there would be no more trains from Lydda during the interim!

And so it was—*farewell!* Barely two and one-half days—but happy days, full days, unforgettable days!

The Blessing of Brendan

By

Sister M. Francis, S.C.M.M., Ph.D.

In the olden days bells played a more important part in the life of the people than is possible now when we live, so many of us, in crowded cities where the noise of the street cars and motor traffic has replaced the music of the bell. Yet, although scenes such as Millet has immortalized in his painting "The Angelus" have become extremely rare in the highly mechanized world of today, even now in the most congested centers we can still find bells which perform their age-old functions:

To praise the true God,
To call the people,
To assemble the clergy,
To mourn the dead,
To ward off plague,
To enhance the feast.

This last month, through the kindness of His Eminence, Cardinal Dougherty, we were privileged to witness in our humble chapel the ancient ritual for the solemn blessing of a bell. The Liturgy for this ceremony was in use in Carlovingian times and probably dates back to about 750 A.D. On October 29, Rev. Philip E. Donahue of Philadelphia, solemnly blessed the bell for our new house and named it "St. Brendan." The name was chosen by Mrs. Charles Griffith, of Merion, Pa., who was the donor and godmother of the bell.

She selected St. Brendan as patron of the bell because he was also called "The Voyager." This zealous missionary to Britain, Wales and Scotland was born in Ireland during the latter part of the fifth century. The tradition of a seven years' sea voyage in the life of the saint probably had its foundation in a real journey, the destination of which is not known though possibly it was to some part of the American continent. As the "Patron of Sailors" it is hoped that he will protect the Medical Missionaries who depart for foreign shores with the chimes of his bell in their ears! The name is rendered even more appropriate by the fact that the bell was chosen for its tone out of two hundred others which had been salvaged from ships which were no longer going to sea.

For the ceremony, the bell was hung on a small stand especially constructed for the purpose and placed near the altar. A festive touch was provided by a small bouquet of flowers fastened to the top and by the red silk covering the supporting structure.

At the appointed hour Father Donahue, clad in surplice and white stole, entered the chapel. He was assisted by Father John O'Rourke, C.S.C., who is our chaplain. The solemn blessing began with the recitation of the seven penitential psalms and the blessing of water and salt. While the bell was being washed inside and out with the holy water the psalms of praise (Ps. 145-150) were recited.

The choice of these psalms by the Church clearly shows that a bell is considered to be a voice which sings the praises of God and proclaims His glory to men. "The words *Laudate Dominum, Laudate eum sol et luna, Laudate eum caeli caelorum, Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus,* which recur again and again like a refrain, produce after a time an impression on the ear similar to the constantly repeated stroke of the clapper on the sonorous bronze of the bell."

Following these beautiful invitations to all of God's creatures to praise Him, the outer lip of the bell was marked with seven small crosses with the Oil of the Sick. Then, while Psalm 28 with its reiterated words *Vox Domini* was chanted, the interior of the bell was signed with four crosses with Holy Chrism.

The ceremony was concluded with the incensing of the bell and the chanting of that part of St. Luke's Gospel which narrates the incident in the house of Martha and Mary, when Jesus declared that Mary had chosen the better part. Perhaps this passage was selected because it is a reminder that only one thing in the world is needful—or perhaps because it is said of Mary that she listened to our Lord's words. After Father Donahue had again made the sign of the Cross in silence over the bell, the godmother pulled the white silk cord attached to the clapper and we all heard "St. Brendan's" voice for the first time.

It is needless to speak of the various uses of the church bell, nor need it be a matter of surprise that church bells are blessed with so solemn a ceremony considering the important occasions to which they are devoted. In its majestic and powerful tone, a bell resembles the voice of God calling His children to the foot of

(*Continued on page* 198)

at home and abroad

America

Medical Mission House
8400 Pine Road
Fox Chase, Philadelphia, Pa.

Medical Mission House
Box 4405
Brookland, Washington, D. C.

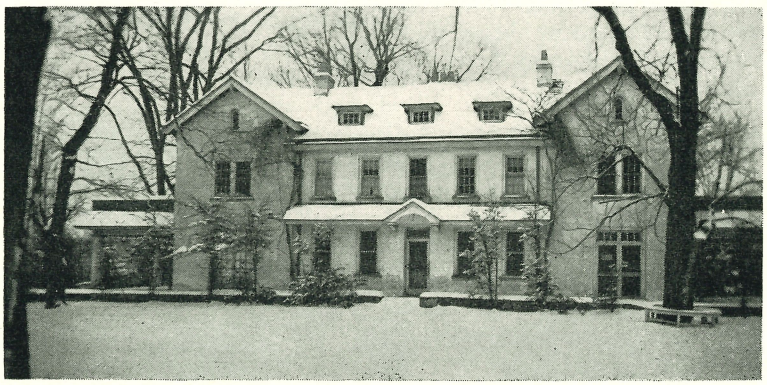
Suzanne was a tiny mite for all her four years. Her face was delicately oval, her eyes a wide and candid blue, and her lips tempered to show the finest shades of pleasure and distress—shades as swift and intangible as thought itself! Suzanne was thoughtful, Suzanne was patient, but for all her pondering and poise, she could not fathom the mystery of time. An amiable relative had promised her that in one week she would take her "downtown" to see the Christmas shop windows. That had been ages and ages ago, and still there had been no Big Excursion! With resolution the little lass approached a Certain Grown Person.

"Is today the week yet, please?"

The Certain Grown Person looked down into the serious, upturned face. "No, not today, yet, Suzanne. It will be four more days. See," she stooped so that the matter might be discussed on the same level, and counted off on her fingers, "one, two, three, four more days."

"Oh." The eyes widened, the lips parted ever so slightly, as a little mind sought to encompass the terrible expanse of FOUR WHOLE DAYS! It was too much; Suzanne decided to come back to something more understandable, more holdable. "But then may I not see my special dress just once more?"

And because the Certain Grown Person had planned her day with a few spare moments for just such an occasion as this, the two of them went off hand-in-hand to inspect the wee plaid jumper with the red blouse, the brand new coat with the tam to match, the smooth brown shoes with almost a heel, all snug in the closet waiting for the Big Excursion.



Our New Home—Medical Mission House, Fox Chase, Philadelphia, Pa.

Trousseau—or a tool-box!

As it was put in last month's editorial, "now we are able to settle down in earnest to a big program." And what could be finer than beginning with the New Year? Of course, a Medical Missionary cannot afford to simply sit and wait for January 1st to roll around before she will turn the turf of new work! Already this month our Patna foundation is having its beginnings. Yet there is something about the start of the official New Year that is splendid and

invigorating. The race has been run a dozen times, and yet, lining up on the mark once more, waiting for the crack of the gun, with the tingle of crowds and banners and bands in the air, enthusiasm kindles. There is zest in the game.

And so, like Suzanne, we are looking forward, and even in a sense awaiting, the day of "reckoning and resolutions." Like her, too, we cannot resist going to the closet of the last twelve months to see the garments which are ready for

Our Old Home—Brookland, Washington, D. C.

our "stepping forward"—or better yet, the tools which all of you have helped us shape, that "charity to the sick and suffering may flow into many parts of the world."

"Recapitulation"

Here, in America, our hopes and pleasures and work have centered around that great hub which all of our friends have had a share in making a reality—our new Motherhouse. We could sum up the whole history perhaps, in half a dozen words: Expectation, procuration, occupation, preparation, separation, celebration—and now, *orare et laborare!* FORWARD!

Just a year ago, *expectation* was running high. Already in October Doctor Dengel had discovered our new home, but discovery is a long way from possession, and even possession, they say, is only *nine* points of the law! We would have to wait until March 1st before the property should become ours!

Continuation

Then—*procuration*. March 1st, and it was *our* Motherhouse, to have and to hold—and to repair! Two intrepid pioneers, Sisters M. Anthony and John Mary, undertook the *occupation* in order to supervise the *preparation*. Plumbers, carpenters, painters—and by August 18th they had the house ready for use. That was the day of *separation!* Novices and postulants were tucked safely into the big bus put at our disposal by the Christian Brothers, and only eight professed sisters were left to occupy the "Medical Mission House of Studies."

Then the climax—the *celebration,* when we could officially welcome all our friends to our new home. A special invitation was extended to our readers by the "Rear Guard," those amiable horses and worms and feathered friends, who have, month by month, put our needs before you in their own way.

And Closing With a Salutation!

Reviewing all that, it is no wonder that, however festive January 1st may be, we feel quite equal to the occasion. We love the "plaid jumper with the red blouse" that is hanging in our closet, ready for wear. It is a garment woven of many threads, from many spindles. We put our "thank you" into new words, into deep, full words: "May the peace and beauty of Christmas be yours; may your New Year be filled with happiness."

Dr. Eleanore Lippits, who opened our "Dutch Home" in Heerlen on October 1

Europe

Medical Mission House
Osterley, Middlesex, England

Medical Mission House
Heerlen, Holland

Our European houses have their "recapitulation," too. Osterley appears a veritable veteran, now, beside the house in Heerlen, barely three months old. Even in the midst of blackouts and evacuations, our postulants have stood fast, the work continues. Sister Monica writes from England: "There are so many empty houses and flats in the neighborhood that it

makes us feel as though we were living in a deserted land. The postulants are wonderfully good—even sorrow and joy are well blended at present—and we can all join in sending from our Osterley house a hearty 'Merry Christmas'!''

From Holland, Sister M. Agatha sends ''resume and prospects'': ''These first weeks we have traveled a great deal. At times this was difficult, as the trains were all being used for the transport of soldiers to the frontier. But we have used bicycles, like everyone else—for gas must be saved.

''Tomorrow we take possession of our house in Heerlen. (Ed. note: More *occupation* and *preparation!*) The garden is very, very small—but it is a garden! The house has three rooms and a kitchen downstairs. One of the rooms will be the chapel—and our first gift was an altar! Everyone has been most kind to us. One of the sisters at whose convent we have been staying even came home from school the other day with some cups. A child had given them to her for 'the Medical Sisters!'

''Up to now, everything has been normal here. Of course, everyone is speaking about war, but they are calm.''

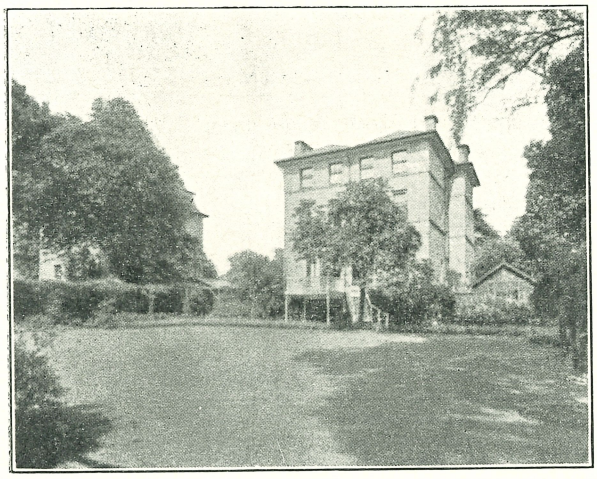
India

Holy Family Hospital
Murree Road
Rawalpindi, India

Medical Mission Sisters
Mitford Municipal Hospital
Dacca, Bengal, India

Mail from India is also affected by the war—all must go through the censor's hands, and the Government has asked that communications be as brief as possible. But Sister M. Cecilia managed to squeeze in her first long letter since her arrival in Dacca before the restrictions became too rigid:

''Here I am, turning up like a bad penny! And are you asking what is the first thing you notice in Dacca? The answer is simple—DIRT! Second? The 'undress' of the people and the ease with which they walk without any shoes! Third? The lack of care of animals. Dogs especially, dozens of them, thin, dirty, uncared for, are roaming around all the streets!



Our English Home—Osterley, Middlesex, England

''The dirt can be accounted for in many ways, I suppose. For one thing, the people do not know any better. And then, too, they are so poor that they cannot afford the simplest conveniences of life. I wish you could see the coolies at work. They wear a piece of cloth on the top of their heads and another around their bodies—and they handle trunks and suitcases of such size

Our Dacca Home—Mitford Municipal Hospital, Dacca, Bengal, India

and weight that one wonders how they can ever live to carry the next one. Their skill is literally wonderful. A mere 100 pounds or so is perched on top of their heads with perfect balance, and under such a load they walk along with unbelievable speed, their feet gripping the ground with surety.

''As for the abundance of dogs! Few people here would even dream of killing an animal, so unless a dog is mad and apt to communicate

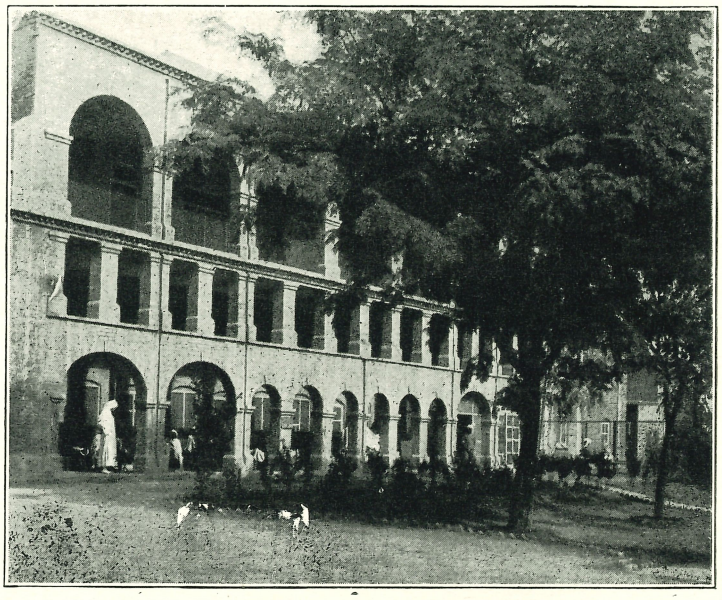
hydrophobia, it is allowed to roam at will and eat whatever anyone is disposed to give it!

"But for all o' that, the people themselves seem very cheerful, and even the beggar at the roadside sits singing between his requests for alms!

"The other day I was on the hospital verandah, from where I could see a group of people on the roof of the new kitchens which are in the course of construction. There was much singing and general *tamasha,* and so, when I went into lunch, I innocently inquired 'whose feast day it was, and why should they choose the *new* roof for their celebration?' The sisters—all of them veterans now except me!—told me in short order that in Bengal, that is *the* way to make a roof! The bricks are smashed into small pieces by a group of people on the ground. They are next taken up the bamboo ladder and the work is continued by a violinist and about twenty little boys! To the rhythm of the music, the bricks are beaten into position by the youngsters who sit in two straight rows of ten and use wooden batons. Singing helps to perfect the rhythm, everyone seems to enjoy the excitement, and when the patch is finished to the satisfaction of the foreman, the whole group moves together and starts the next patch, until the whole area of the roof has been completed.

"But of course, this is only for a *pukka* (first-class) roof—many houses have them of a less permanent kind.

"And so in India—as everywhere else, I suppose—one lives and learns!"



Our Home in Pindi—Holy Family Hospital, Murree Road, Rawalpindi, India

Skipping Into Space!

Patna is right on our way from Dacca to Rawalpindi, but just at present it is scarcely more than a space with something around it on the Medical Missionary's map! However, it is easier to *fill* space than to *make* space, at least at times, as the Medical Missionaries in Washington discovered before the August exodus!

The beginning has been made, but, of course, there are as yet no pictures, nor—a real sign that it is in truth a *very* new project—even a least of needs! But the needs will be forthcoming.

To be the goat—it is no fun,

at least around Mo-ham-me-dans! Which is poor versifying, but very much to the point, to judge from Sister Alma Julia's note: "I had several interesting cases in the Center last week. One was a woman, a maternity case, who was about to have her twelfth child and who was certain she was going to die. All her daughters kept standing around her, crying with a lustiness—and a perseverance—that was equalled only by the woman herself!

"When things looked at their worst, they brought in a goat so that she might touch it before it was sacrificed. The family was Mohammedan. The sacrifice was consummated all right—right outside the patient's door! I had to step over the remains when I left!

"I was with the woman in a hot, airless, windowless room for two and a half hours—but everything turned out lovely. The baby was a 9½-pound boy—I suppose they gave credit to the goat, but I thanked Our Lady and St. Jude *and*

the good instructions I had received from Sister Stephanie!''

Up in the Clouds—

Our other Pindi letters come from Murree, where our sisters take turns at vacationing. Sister M. Jude writes:

''The days are beautiful here. I love to look at the mountains and the quiet valleys beneath. One feels so fully the great majesty of God, and the littleness of ourselves. I am having ten days of my vacation now, and the rest will come later, when we make our retreat.

''Yesterday we went to see a play given by the pupils of Jesus and Mary Convent School. It was very good—the children performed in some dances that were really lovely. Last Sunday we visited the Presentation Convent, and arrived home just a few minutes before a sandstorm broke. And mighty lucky we were, for it proved to be the worst that has occurred since I have been here!''

Babes in the Woods—Almost!

Sister M. Camillus adds a postscript: ''Sister Virginia and I have had two good, long hikes through the hills. Both times we arrived at Mohammedan villages, and were received with open arms! The people were quite disappointed when we declined their invitation to stay to tea! The last trip, though, almost finished us. We decided not to take sandwiches, as they were too cumbersome—we invariably let them roll down a hill, or sat on them accidently! But we picked the wrong day! Our departure took place at 9 a. m.; we arrived home at exactly 6 p. m.—just missed our way a bit on the way back!''

Our Cover

Like a great furrowed field, the earth lies in the light of the glorious Star, that is Christ. In the foreground are her gifts to Him, gifts once actually presented through the fingers of three seekers after Truth: Incense, a tribute to Christ-God; gold, a tribute to Christ-King; myrrh, a tribute to Christ-Redeemer—for ''we were bought at a great price.''

So are summed up the suppressed tenseness of the expectation; the completeness of the realization; the joyousness of the challenge that reaches even to today. Christmas is the feast of children. There is a charm to the simplicity of the little child that stands, awestruck, before the beautiful mystery of a new baby, that attempts to understand the wonder of it, that runs to bring its mother and its father and all it loves to share the joy of a splendid reality.

''All nations shall do Him service.'' It is the challenge of Christmas, the challenge to ''little ones'' to bring all men to see a Child, new-born, to visit Christ, our Brother.

"THE KING'S HOME"
May He fulfill the wish of all the Medical Missionaries from all their "homes"—that your Christmas be merry and your New Year filled with blessings!

Medical Mission Notes

India and Vitamin C

In the United States nowadays there are probably very few regions where mothers are unacquainted with the word "Vitamin." Johnny and Mary get their daily requirement of orange juice and carrots and enjoy a healthy childhood.

In India, on the other hand, there are few mothers who understand the needs of their babies. This does not mean, however, that we are to class the country as hopelessly and incurably ignorant. India, too, boasts of her "Research Institutes" where scientists investigate the possibilities of native plants for the use of her people.

The Haffkine Institute of Bombay has recently announced the discovery of a source of Vitamin "C" (the anti-scorbutic vitamin), which is nearly as rich in the vitamin as lemon juice which is used to make up the medical concentrates. "Toddy," a drink made from the juice of various East Indian Palm Trees, has been found upon chemical analysis, when it is fresh and unfermented, to be a rich source of the Vitamin "C." Because the vitamin is readily destroyed by the present method of handling, the people now get very little of this important vitamin from the drink. Special attention, was, therefore, paid by the investigators to the preservation of this vitamin. The only process to which the juice had hitherto been subjected was uncontrolled fermentation which lead to a total loss of its nutritive value. Recent research has found a means of treating the "Toddy" in such a way that the beverage retains its dietary value.

The importance of this discovery can be understood when one realizes that a large percentage of the people of India, including the well-to-do classes, suffer from the effects of the deficiency of this vitamin. The absence of Vitamin C in the diet is the cause of scurvy (in extreme cases), of fragility of bones, loosening and decay of teeth, as well as increased susceptibility to infection, although this last is not specific for this vitamin. In addition Vitamin C is of special importance to women during pregnancy and lactation.

Besides the important Vitamin C to be found in "Toddy," the analysis showed that fresh unfermented juice contained as much as 5 per cent levulose. This is a sugar of peculiar value which is readily assimilated by the body. Since it does not raise the level of the blood sugar except in quantity, it is suitable for use by mild diabetics. Methods are therefore being sought to make commercially possible the isolation of this sugar from "Toddy." At the present its supplies are rare and therefore the sugar is quite expensive.

The Medical Course in Würzburg

Beginning July 17, 1939, the sixteenth course in the fundamentals of medical aid for missionaries was given at the Würzburg Institute. These courses are given to missionaries who are in regions where it is difficult to find a doctor. A rudimentary medical course enables them to treat the most urgent cases and to give first aid to wounded. The missionaries may also have to treat themselves or each other in cases of necessity.

The number of those who participated this year was very large. The course was not confined to classes of the Institute only, but comprised classes with specialists as well. During the last week of the course some lectures on tropical diseases were given by a professor of the Tropical Diseases Institute of Hamburg.

As in other years, a course in photography was included in addition to the medical course. It is one that is very much appreciated by the future missionaries, since it enables them to get an insight into the most recent discoveries made in this field.—*Les Missions Catholiques.*

Dispensaries

Forty-seven dispensaries, two hospitals, and one leprosarium in the various Maryknoll Missions care for more than three hundred thousand patients annually.

In many instances where no other contacts could be made with pagan neighbors, the Maryknoll priests, Brothers, and Sisters have been able to relieve suffering while they applied also a few words of grace.—*The Field Afar,* November 1939.

Charity in China

The continuance of the war in China gives constant opportunity to the missionaries to play the part of Good Samaritans. In *The Far East* for November, we find a picture of "Sisters in Charity: two Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, one Chinese Sister of St. Mary, one Lorettine, two St. Columban Sisters and five native Deaconesses, who worked among the suffering refugees in the Hankow area."

In Our Library

In the Steps of St. Francis, *by Ernest Raymond. H. C. Kinsey and Company, New York,* 1939. 372 *pp.*, $2.50.

This is not just another life of Saint Francis—rather it is the story of *Il Poverello,* of his philosophy applied to the chaotic world of today.

The author went to Assisi and followed Brother Francis in his journeyings from there after the foundation of his *Fratres Minores,* his "Little Brothers," in an attempt to grasp the spirit of St. Francis in the very places where he had lived and experienced his close union with the Divine seven hundred years ago. The book takes the form of a pilgrimage as one visits the sites once hallowed with Francis' presence.

Every man is a thought of God. —*Msgr. Kerby.*

Beautifully written as it is, lovers of St. Francis will delight in many pages of *In the Steps of Saint Francis.* However, while the author, like so many others, has seen the beauty and the simplicity of the life of "the Little Poor Man," and has to a great extent grasped the spirit which St. Francis bequeathed to us, he has not succeeded in differentiating between what is superstitious and what is reverence, between what is purely physiological and what is miraculous—a very real manifestation of the Divine Power, albeit our poor finite minds cannot understand it. After all, to really understand St. Francis, his ideals, his philosophy, one must have the precious gift of Faith which Saint Francis had—Faith in God and belief in His Power to set aside the laws of nature (which are of His Own making), and Faith in the Church He founded. For Pietro de Bernardone's son could never have become the ageless Saint Francis of Assisi outside the Catholic Church. And since the world does not believe in Her, the world will never follow the example of "The Little Poor Man."

* * *

Pathways to God, *by Reverend John Henaghan, Saint Columban's Foreign Mission Society. Saint Columban's, Nebr.,* 1939. 147 *pp.*, $1.10 *postpaid.*

The preface to this volume, written by the Archbishop of Manila, tell us that the "book has been written to make us lovers of prayer." Its pages are permeated with the spirit of prayer and it gives to the sincere reader the desire of communing with God—which is prayer.

Written with a simplicity that attracts, the book will be found especially helpful by those who have not yet become too well acquainted with God in prayer, although all will find much profit in it.

Father Henaghan uses as the background the most sublime of all prayers—the one which Christ Himself taught us and which we all too often say without appreciation of its full meaning. When we understand our own nothingness and misery, when we realize our complete dependence on the mercy of God—then we shall truly know how to pray in union with the Eucharistic Christ and Mary, His Mother and ours. This is the lesson that the author would have us learn as he shows us the *Pathways to God,* for he reminds us that "in the world today there is no hope, no comfort, no strength save in the power of prayer," when we turn to God acknowledging His Fatherhood and His supreme dominion over us. "Not to grow in prayer is to be deaf and blind and dumb in the presence of the wonders of God, His Glory, His Mercy, His Love." *Pathways to God* will help the soul to grow in prayer and in a love of God.

* * *

Heroes of the Cross, *by Reverend Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. Fortuny's, New York,* 1939. 175 *pp.*, $2.00.

The title *Heroes of the Cross* suggests a volume giving us a picture of the lives of the Franciscans who watered the soil of our own continent with their blood, and the always intensely fascinating story of the moment when they laid down their lives for Christ and won for themselves the glorious crown of martyrdom. However, since the complete story of these one hundred and seventeen Franciscans could scarcely be told in one hundred and seventy-five pages we must content ourselves—for the time being only, we hope—with these all too brief accounts of the martyrs who suffered untold hardships and deprivations and even death itself in order to plant the Faith of Christ on our own continent. It will likely come as a great surprise to most readers to know that here in the United States sixty-nine Franciscan priests and brothers met violent deaths for the Faith, so rarely do we stop to think that our own soil too has been bedewed with the blood of martyrs—the seed of Christians.

Have you wished sometimes that you could keep the little "bookmarks" we have printed on this page? We have a number of them made up on small cards. For samples or information, write: MEDICAL MISSION PRESS, Box 4405, Brookland, D. C.

December Mission Intention

"For the Success of Catholic Universities in Mission Lands"

It might seem to many that a Catholic University would be a long deferred institution in a missionary field. The very fact, however, that our Holy Father proposes the success of Catholic Universities in mission lands, as an intention for the Apostleship of Prayer, opens the way for a better understanding of a University's place in the life of any people.

That most important person, the man in the street, would very generally refuse to believe that his life is deeply affected by the Universities of his country. Yet short meditation will make it clear to any thinking man and woman that the newspaper, the cinema, the newsreel, the radio, the daily columnist, the Sunday supplement are the factors daily forming the opinion of millions of our people. In hourly editions and in four-a-day broadcasts, this continuous mental cloud in which our people walk through life arises from news items of fact or fiction used as pegs on which the writer or speaker hangs his own view of current events and his own philosophy of life. He or she—indeed these purveyors seem almost a neuter gender—in turn is college bred and has been only too often inoculated with a poisonous, because Godless, attitude toward life.

Fifty years ago the Hierarchy of the United States, seeing evidence that the universities of this country were divorcing God from their teaching, had the prophetic vision of the day now at its noon when the results would threaten the very foundations of this Republic. They knew that unless there was a Catholic University, the unquestioned peer of any secular university in the land, there would be no power to save the people from the chaos of irreligion percolating down from university halls to the newspaper readers, the movie-goers, the columnist devotees.

If this be true in a land where the Church is strong and the faithful numerous and loyal, how easily can one see the mind of the Holy Father recognizing the need of a group of Catholic scholars on a university level in mission fields where the frontiers of the Church are ever being pushed forward and where the new faithful, a small band, need every care and protection the Church can offer.

The Holy Father's intention again reveals the luminous mind called to Father the Church and to care in apostolic zeal for those nurseries of the Faith which we call Mission Fields.—The Right Reverend Joseph Corrigan, S.T.D., Rector, The Catholic University of America.

Our Book Mark

It is impossible for human eyes to look into the sun and to receive the whole brightness of it. If one wants to get at least a slight idea of its colors, one must consider the opalescence of the rainbow, which splits up the fullness of its shades and hues through the spectrum of a drop of rain and reflects them side by side.

In just the same way it is impossible for us to see God as He is or to grasp His thoughts. If one wishes to understand the greatness and beauty of His thoughts, one has to consider man. "Every man is a thought of God." God's thoughts are immortal; so the souls of men will live forever. This man represents God's goodness, another His mercy, another His justice, another His wisdom. But the prism which received the entire world of divine thoughts and makes them radiate in the single human soul is Christ "in Whom dwells the fullness of divinity" and "of Whose fullness we have all received."—J. Q.

THE BLESSING OF BRENDAN

(*Continued from page* 190)

His altar to receive His blessing, to show by their union the oneness of the Church herself. Or again it is the voice of one who implores.

Three times a day St. Brendan's peal reminds us of the great mystery of the Incarnation, of the humiliation of the Son of God, of the dignity of the Mother of God. At the close of the day, the tolling admonishes us to pray for all the faithful departed. The *De Profundis* bell was rung for the first time on the Feast of All Souls. Several other offices will be required of our bell, not the least of which will be the joyous Godspeed of departing missionaries. For whom will the first "Departure Bell" ring? And where will they be bound? That is a secret held inviolate by the future but this we know—that St. Brendan's voice will enhance the feast!

R. I. P.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Sister M. Odelia, S.N.D., Washington, D. C.
Mr. John H. Ransdell, Arlington, Va.
Miss Mollie Ball, Providence, R. I.
Mrs. Catherine Breen, Washington, D. C.
Mrs. John Cammach, Washington, D. C.
Captain J. W. McGrath, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mr. Lawrence Grady, Hamden, Conn.
Mr. Joseph F. Cummings, Hartford, Conn.
Mr. James McCann, Philadelphia, Pa.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord: and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

We Have a Little Tree—

—but we need-le-little help!

Sure, not every tree needs needles—
Some with leaves are green and fair,
But a fir tree without needles
Would look mighty grim and bare!
Then, if you have no objections,
Let us play at "just suppose"—
Just suppose our mission magazine
Would be a tree that grows—
A sturdy little sapling,
Not with leaves spread here and there,
But a jolly Christmas evergreen
With needles for its hair.
Now, if needles were SUBSCRIPTIONS,
Wouldn't you feel shamed and galled
If they came so sparse and scattered
That our little tree looked bald?
Send us needles! Any—MANY!
Help our tree to save its scalp—
For our Christmas tree is growing
And we need-le-little help!

The philosopher says we must have an *eye* for the *thread of friendship*—so, to "get to the point"—why not give "needles" for Christmas gifts?

Each one is guaranteed to last one year; price—

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BROOKLAND, D. C.

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The Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries is a religious community of women founded in 1925 for the purpose of providing medical care to the sick in the foreign missions.

The Motherhouse and Novitiate are located in Fox Chase, Philadelphia, Pa. There is also a House of Studies in Brookland, Washington, D. C., and Houses of Postulate in England and Holland.

At present the Society labors in India, where the Sisters conduct hospitals, dispensaries, maternity and child welfare centers, training schools for native nurses and midwives, and similar health activities. It is the purpose of the Society to send Medical Missionaries to any mission field of the world. The Society has many requests; it needs many vocations.

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